

THE BEACON

A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND THE HOME



VOLUME II.

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NUMBER 36



Now it is June and the secret is told;
Flashed from the buttercup's glory of gold;
Hummed in the bumblebee's gladness, and
sung
New from each bough where a bird's-nest is
swung;
Breathed from the clover-beds when the
winds pass;
Chirped in small psalms, through the aisles of
the grass.

Mrs. A. D. T. WHITNEY.

For The Beacon.

From Virginia's Back Porch.

BY LOUISE M. BREITENBACH.

"This is going to be a very mopey summer, mother." Virginia Wells smothered a sigh and nestled her head deeper among the couch-pillows. "To lie here on this porch the whole summer when I promised to help Miss Gordon with her settlement children in Chicago! I'm a monster to complain when you've been such an angel of goodness," a contrite look came into the earnest eyes, "but I do want to do some real work in the world, and to waste all these precious days is simply maddening."

Mrs. Wells raised a porch-shade, letting in a stream of yellow June sunlight, before she answered serenely, "You've only to remember the little story 'everybody's lonesome,' dear, and you'll find you can do some real work in the world even from this back porch."

Virginia smiled up whimsically into the placid face. "Fate seems to be against my doing anything this summer but lying here with folded hands. Why, every house in the block but ours is boarded up tight. If only the Thompsons next door hadn't suddenly taken it into their heads to go abroad! How stupid it'll be with all those girls away and their house closed up! What fun Phoebe and I had all last summer making Fluff carry messages through the hedge! Poor old Fluff!" She addressed a little black ball of a dog curled up near her feet in a pool of sunshine.

Mrs. Wells drew up a wicker easy-chair beside the couch.

"The house isn't closed, my dear. Mrs. Thompson's great-aunt has come to live there with only— Yes, Martha?" she interrupted herself as a maid appeared in the kitchen doorway. "The telephone—for me? I'll not be long, Virgie. Perhaps you'd like to look at some of these new books." With a tender glance she hurried away.

But the books, for all their gay covers, did not tempt Virginia. She lay, one cheek pillowed in her hand, her usually sunny face clouded with discontent. For a time she remained perfectly motionless, eyes fixed soberly on the beautiful old-fashioned garden.

But she did not see the pretty flower-beds with their borders of sweet alyssum, nor the cherry trees vivid with jewel-like fruit and full of pilfering robins. She saw only the downfall of her cherished plans with the illness that had laid her low a month before the close of boarding-school.

Suddenly she stared with all her eyes across the low box-hedge into the Thompsons' porch. A young girl in a faded, patched calico dress was advancing quickly to the end of the porch, a pail of steaming water and a scrubbing-brush in either hand. The next instant she had dropped to her knees and was scrubbing with all the strength of her thin, overgrown body.

"What a sad face!" passed through Virginia's mind.

Interested in spite of herself, she watched her ply the scrubbing-brush with a regular, rhythmic motion. Suddenly the scrubbing stopped. The next moment two tears fell.

Impatiently the young girl wiped them away with her skirt, and the scrubbing began again. Again it stopped, and this time Virginia saw streams of tears course down the little maid's cheeks.

"Everybody's lonesome," quoted Virginia to herself softly, and all discontent was gone from her face.

Presently the young girl fell to scrubbing again, and now she was whistling a tuneless little air in a brave attempt to keep up her spirits.

"Finished, Charity?" a voice called, and Virginia saw the girl start and flush guiltily. "N-no, not yet," she answered in a choked voice. The kitchen door opened, and the quaintest little old lady stepped on to the porch.

"Crying again, Charity," she said reproachfully. "You're homesick, I'm afraid. Perhaps I would do better to send you back."

"Oh, no, Miss Renston," begged the young girl, clasping the brush tragically. "I like it here already, and I'll try not to c-cry any more." She turned her head away, and began to scrub energetically.

With a helpless little gesture the old lady went back into the house.

"Mother, do you think John would pick me a bouquet right away?" Virginia demanded in her old eager manner the instant that lady appeared on the screened porch. "I've an errand for Fluff—next door."

Mrs. Wells' shining eyes were the only outward sign of a thankful heart. For the first time in all these weary weeks Virginia was beginning to seem like her own bright self. "It will delight the old man."

A half hour later Fluff, carrying a tiny basket overflowing with flowers and a note tucked away in their midst, made his way through the box-hedge.

Cheeks faintly tinged with color, Virginia watched for his return. It seemed hours before she caught sight of him wig-wagging up the gravel walk. Mrs. Wells was at the door to let him in. With a most business-like air he trotted up to his young mistress.

"She has written me a note, mother. Just listen:—

"Kind Miss Virginia Wells,—You show true goodness of heart, my child, to take such an interest in my little maid, Charity. She accompanied me from my home, and I fear misses her brothers and sisters. I shall take advantage of your kind offer, and send her to you this afternoon.

"Your well-wisher,

"JANE RENSTON."

Virginia opened her eyes from a refreshing nap upon a little figure in an outworn blue gingham, shyly advancing up the gravel path.

"Come in," the sick girl invited pleasantly, as the little maid paused uncertainly before the door. "Just lift up the latch and walk in."

"O grandmother, what big eyes you've got," Charity responded promptly, with an unexpected twinkle in her eyes.

And almost before she could realize it she had forgotten her fears and shyness, and was pouring out story after story of the old lady's fairy-tale goodness. Her eyes were bright as stars as she wound up, "Oh, but she's been kind to us, Miss, since father took sick, and ten mouths to feed."

Virginia understood now the old, "little-mother" look in the pinched face. "And so you've come to live with Miss Renston in that big, lonely old house."

"Yes, Miss." Her chin quivered. "It's lonely. But it isn't that as makes me feel so bad." Her eyes were full of tears, but Virginia's sympathetic glance urged her on. "You see, I had to leave school when the new baby came, and it 'most broke my heart, because a kind lady told me last winter she'd help me go to high school this fall, and be a teacher some day, and now I can't—I can't." After a minute she added, "She told me a young lady would hear me say my lessons this summer, and somehow, when I was doing my scrubbing this morning, and saw you and all your books, it all came over me sudden-like, and I just couldn't stand it any longer."

When Charity stood up to go, Virginia said, with a soft seriousness, "Ask Miss Renston if you can come over to-morrow when your work is done and bring your school-books along."

The girl eyed her a moment, as if doubting her own ears, then, speechless for joy, fairly flew down the path.

The lessons began that very afternoon, and all during the summer days Virginia kept school.

One afternoon the school of one had been dismissed, and was tripping happily in the consciousness of praise well-deserved down the garden walk. The next moment she came dancing back to Virginia, who sat reading on the back porch. "I met the postman, and here's a letter for you." She smiled and was gone.

"From Miss Gordon," Virginia said half-aloud, with a pleased little laugh.

Two minutes later she burst into her mother's peaceful sitting-room. "Mother, the queerest thing has happened," she began breathlessly. "Miss Gordon went abroad for the summer most unexpectedly, and she's just got back to Chicago, and to-day she found that one of her protégées is living here with another settlement worker, and she wants me to have her tutored so she can go to High School, and who do you think she is?"

Mrs. Wells shook her head with an amused twinkle.

"Charity Brown, and she lives right next door with Miss Renston." Virginia's eyes fairly sparkled with delight. "Why, mother, I didn't have to go to Chicago to help Miss Gordon, did I? It really hasn't been a mopey summer after all."

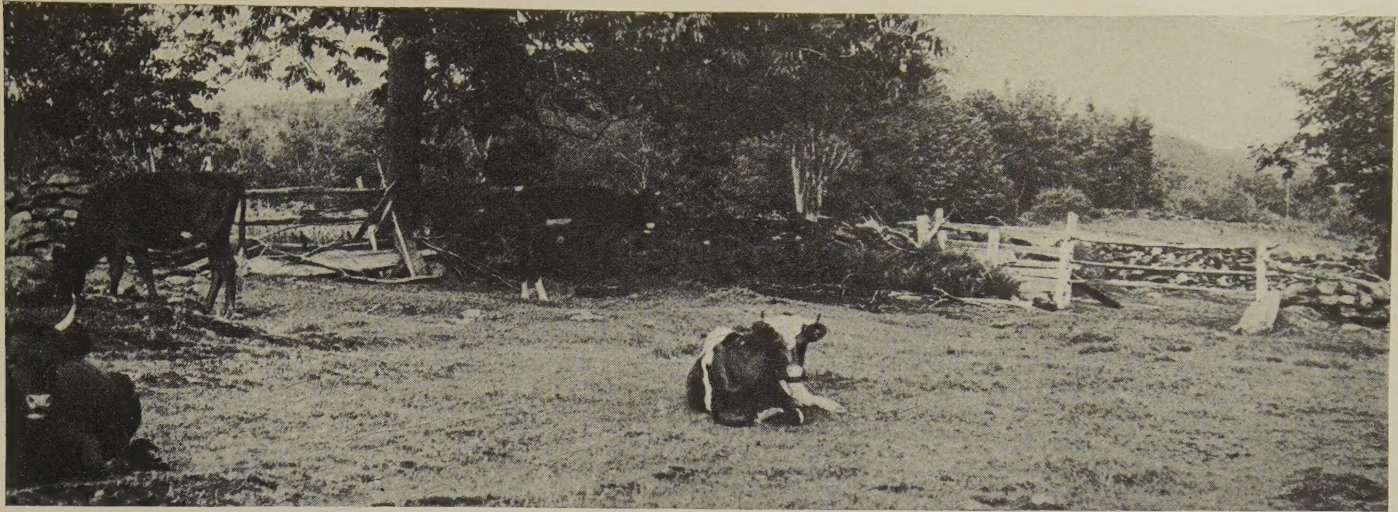
For The Beacon.

The Frolic of the Flowers.

BY AGNES LOCKHART HUGHES.

One night the little grasses thought they'd like to give a ball,
So they pitched their fairy tents upon the lawn,
And invited many flowers to enjoy the merry dance
That would last from evensong 'till break of dawn.
They gathered many fireflies, and diamond dewdrops, too,
And hung them near and far, to light the scene,
While mother grass wove strings of pearls and deftly laid them on
Her little children's rustling robes of green.
Then beneath a silver toadstool the orchestra began,
And played a march to open up the ball;
The bumble-bee hummed very loud, the wasp was buzzing low,
And the dragon-fly could not be heard at all.
A grasshopper was lively, so he led the little band,
'Till a cricket caught the measure of his tune;
But the lazy caterpillar did not play a single note,
And a butterfly sat winking at the moon.
Soon they heard the bluebells ringing, so the gates were opened wide,
And clovers crowded down the scented aisle,
While a daffodil was laughing as she whispered to the phlox
That the "hollyhock was old and out of style."
Geranium and fuchsia came together in a coach
That was fashioned from a silver leaf, I ween;
Sweet heliotrope was on the box, and very chic he looked
In livery of purple, with trimmings all of green.
An auto then came swiftly up, and from it stepped Miss Rose,
With crimson satin gown and wreath of gold,
While a cock's-comb who was chauffeur tooted loud his siren clear,
For he was quite elated and very, very bold.
In an aeroplane the larkspur came, and brought the dahlia gay,
With gorgeous velvet wrap and hood of red,
While springing from a taxi-cab, sweet-william handed out
Miss Poppy, whom he hoped some day to wed.
Now the ball was fairly opened, and a lily led the march,
All stately in her shimmering gown of white.
Then the flowers all began to waltz, but primrose grew quite faint,
For the oleander held her much too tight.
Now all the while a little star had peeped upon the scene
From his window in the purple arch on high,
And he longed to join the dancers, but the way was very far
To the fairy ball-room yonder, from his home, the jewelled sky.
Sudden, on night's ocean anchored, he espied a silver boat,
In which the proud moon often used to sail,
So he clambered in the crescent craft and through the darkness sped,
But his heart was all a-tremble and his face grew strangely pale.

"Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things which are before."



Photograph by Herbert Whitney.

AT THE PASTURE BARS.

The garden gate stood open, and he passed the mignonette,
Whose perfume almost turned his giddy head;
Then saw the brown-eyed susan whisper to the buttercup,
As past a marguerite he quickly fled.
A trumpet-flower blew a blast, the galop to announce,
The jonquil and nasturtium whirled in glee,
While gladiolus watched the star, and, as he crossed the floor,
They asked the marigold, "Who can he be?"
He dazzled little pansy, with the pretty, pensive eyes,
And flirted with a violet dressed in blue;
But, when he met Miss Poppy, in scarlet silken frock,
He straight began this winsome maid to woo.
Azalea felt quite jealous that he had not danced with her,
And peony's face was dyed with blushes deep.
The sweet-peas early took their leave, because their mother said
That "her daughters must not lose their beauty sleep."
The star was dancing merrily, and never thought of home,
Nor gave he any heed to flight of time,
Till the flowers all were leaving after bidding their adieux,
And four o'clock rang out its silver chime.
Dismayed, he gazed about him, for Miss Poppy now had gone,
And left him all alone beside the gate.
His silver boat had vanished, and he couldn't find his way,
For the height was dizzy climbing, and the distance very great,
Besides, the moon in anger had veiled her haughty face,
And not a star was shining in yon sky;
So the little outcast, lonely, flung himself upon the grass
And straightway then began to sob and cry.
Now the mother grass was kindly, so she tucked him into bed,
And there he slept till day with gold was bright;
A sunbeam kissed his eyelids, and softly he awoke;
But, ah, his coat of silver was changed to pearly white.
Then he heard a sweet voice saying, "See this English daisy, fair,—
'Tis the prettiest one that I have ever seen,—

Its heart is all a-sparkle and fused with silv'ry light,
A-glow upon its dew-pearled bed of green."
The pale star, wondering, listened, but could not speak a word,
As trembling midst the clover leaves he lay.
"An English daisy," so they thought; but, ah, the grasses knew
That a star from heaven wandered, and on earth had gone astray.

The New Boy's Motto.

After Halstead Murray and Roger Barnes left school they each applied for a place in the First National Bank in Hughestown, the small city where they lived. Roger got the place and came around to tell Halstead about it. "Sorry for you, old fellow," he said cheerfully; "but there was only one place, you see, and I had the pull. You know Mr. Stevens is one of the directors, and my uncle worked for him for years. Uncle Sam said a good word for me, and there I am."

Mr. Murray was blacking his shoes when Halstead told him about Roger's visit. He finished the side of the shoe he was rubbing, and then, as he dipped his brush in the blacking box again, he asked with a quizzical smile, "What did you say to that?"

"Why," Hal laughed a little, "I said I was glad for him. That was all. There seemed to be nothing else to say."

"That's right," said the father, as he fell to rubbing the second shoe. "We'll have to try to catch hold of some other rope, boy."

But no other opening appeared, and Halstead was feeling rather blue, when he received a card asking him to call at the bank one day. He went promptly, and came back with the great news that Roger had left and he was engaged in Roger's place.

A week afterward he found his Cousin Clara at the table when he came home, a little late, to dinner. "How's banking?" she began.

"I can only tell you about ice banks," returned Hal, cutting his beef soberly. "I'm an ice chopper, ma'am. Been at it all morning."

Clara looked puzzled. "Why, your mother said you'd gone into the First National. What do you mean?"

"I'm hardly in," he said. "I'm rather

an outside clearing-house. It's stormed nearly all the time for a week, you know, and my part of the banking business is to keep the bank steps and sidewalks cleared."

Clara smiled. "I see," she said, "beginning at the lowest round, and all that sort of thing. Too low down for Roger, wasn't it?"

"Roger says," replied Hal, "that he told Mr. Peters that he could shovel snow anywhere. He came here to learn banking."

"How about you?" Clara persisted.

Halstead hesitated. Then he opened his watch at the back and passed it across the table. Engraved on the inner cover were the words "Obey orders." "Father and mother had that put on when they gave me the watch, two years ago," he said.—*Exchange.*

*The roads, the woods, the heavens, the hills,
Are not a world to-day,
But just a place made for us
In which to play.*

For The Beacon.

"Let Go."

BY CHARLES W. CASSON.

It was a very dark night. One could hardly see one's hand an arm's length away. And, as for the path, one might as well have been walking across a huge blackboard without a trace of chalk upon it.

John Halpen was trying to make his way along. He was a boy of fifteen. That he was brave one might know by his attempting to make that trip that night. But the errand was important, and like a good boy, as well as brave, he had started to do it.

The darkness was not the worst of it. John had never been over the road before. He was visiting in a house near by, and for the first time. And this was a direction in which he had never gone before, and so he had no knowledge of the path.

But even this was not the worst of that night trip. Part of his journey lay close to the edge of a great cliff. The path became very narrow, and a step out of the way, he had been told, would mean death on the jagged rocks far below.

He would never have thought of going if it had not been the quickest way to the doctor's house. At the house where he was staying a little child was sick, and he had offered to go for the doctor, as there was no

one else who could go. So bravely he started off through the darkness.

You may imagine just how he felt as he made his way slowly through the blackness of the night. He had been warned of the danger ahead and the need of keeping exactly in the path. So we may know that he was just as careful as he could possibly be, as you or I would have been if we had been there.

Carefully he made his way along. As he came to the place where the way lay along the edge of the cliff, he was even more careful. But in spite of his care, his foot slipped in some way, and he went over!

However, by good fortune his hand struck the branch of a tree that grew over the edge, and, clutching it tightly, he hung on. And there he was, hanging in the darkness over what he had been told was sure death if he let go.

He shouted for help, though he knew that there was little hope of any one hearing him, as there were no houses near by, and not many were likely to be out on a night like that. But, nevertheless, he shouted just as loudly as he could.

Soon he found his strength going. His hands became weaker, and he knew that in a short time he would have to let go. At last, however, when he felt that he could not hang on more than a few moments longer, he heard a voice from the path above.

Some one was passing and had heard his call for help. The man lived near by, and knew every foot of the path. And because he knew he shouted out to the boy, as he discovered him hanging to the branch, the very strange advice, "Let go!"

John thought it very strange advice indeed, and hung on with all the strength that remained.

And the man shouted again in the darkness: "Let go. You are safe."

Then John let go, and fell *four inches to the ground!* After all his agony and pain he found that he was safe all the time, and that all he had needed to do was to let go. There never had been any danger of death at all.

There is something in this story that every child in our Unitarian Sunday-schools should learn. But the story has taken so much space that we can only suggest the lessons to be learned. Let me tell them to you, and through the months of the vacation, when the *Beacon* does not come to you week after week, you may sometimes think of them.

First, there is no danger in God's world to the one who walks the path of duty and tries to keep on the path. If you do your best, it is always safe to let go, and trust yourself in the hands of God.

Second, truth is not so much something to hold, but something to be held by. Never try to believe anything, for truth will compel you to believe if you let go of your prejudice and trust in the truth.

Do these seem hard to understand? Perhaps they are. But think of them as you grow older, and you will find that there are help and joy and peace in them. *Let go, and let God guide!*

For All the Year Round.

To look up and not down—that is Faith. To look forward and not back—that is Hope. To look out and not in—that is Charity in thought. To lend a hand—that is Charity in action.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

A Vacation Message.

With this number *The Beacon* closes its second year. Those who have had it in charge might indulge in the wish that it had been better, but they incline rather to be thankful that it has been so good. Especially are they thankful that its readers have increased in numbers and that so many have expressed pleasure in reading it.

To the teachers and pupils in our schools who will soon separate for the usual vacation we extend our heartiest greeting, with the hope that the summer months may bring them rest and health. Perhaps the best thing the children can do is to have a happy vacation, free from all thought of books. Older people, however, and especially teachers, may well find the vacation happier and more satisfactory if something is done to improve their work in the school.

There is one thing every teacher might do in these summer months, and that is to read at least one good book that relates to Sunday-school work. The President of the Sunday School Society will be glad at any time to recommend such books. Perhaps a simpler way would be to write to Miss Florence Everett, Librarian of the Circulating Library, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, asking for a copy of the catalogue of that collection. Any one may use these books without cost save for return postage. Among them are many that relate to Sunday-school work, many that make the Bible easier to understand, and still others on the nature of the child. If teachers will state to either of the above-named persons what they expect to teach next year, or what their problems are, books will be selected and sent.

Another thing that many are now doing, but more might do, is to attend a Summer Sunday School Institute. At present we have three of these: one at Meadville, Pa., from June 24 to July 5; one at the Isles of Shoals, N.H., from July 14 to July 20; one at The Weirs, N.H., August 4 to 11. If our teachers but knew how instructive and inspiring these Institutes are, every one who is able to get to one of them would do so. They are all held at places where delightful outdoor life combines with the lectures and conferences. They bring together such congenial groups of workers having a common purpose that mutual contact is in itself a preparation for better work. Lectures are given that make the Bible more easily understood and taught, and that help teachers to get into close touch with their pupils.

The Sunday School Society has had a most satisfactory year, in some respects the best it has ever enjoyed. The President has had the privilege of speaking to teachers and schools in about seventy-five of our churches, besides meeting many teachers in Institutes, Conferences, and Sunday School Unions. These visits have been among our churches in Maine, Canada, and on the Pacific Coast, as well as nearer home. Everywhere he has met most delightful people. Memories of schools assembled, with earnest teachers and bright-faced children, will remain long in his heart. All indications point to even better things next year.

Let us, then, have a happy summer! The world is very beautiful. There is much to enjoy, much to learn, much to do. Forgetting ourselves, making others happy, trusting God, we shall find all that is worth having and prepare for more and better service.

RECREATION CORNER.

Dear Editor of the Beacon,—This makes the first time I have ever written to *The Beacon*. I enjoy the stories and puzzles in this paper very much; in fact, I can hardly wait for the next one to come. The stories by Mr. Casson also interest me, particularly the one about the Niagara ice bridge, as I read in a newspaper afterwards that the Royal Humane Society gave Heacock's parents an after-death medal in commemoration of his brave act.

In one of the *Beacons* this year was a Band of Mercy hymn, which I thought would be splendid for the Band of Mercy to which I belong. I took it to the next meeting and read it, explaining at the same time that I thought it would be a good plan to set it to music and sing it in our band. They also thought it a good plan, and so now we are singing it to the tune of "Greenland's Icy Mountains."

Hoping to see this letter in print, I am

Your interested reader,

MARTHA MOREHOUSE.

189 Bradley Street,
NEW HAVEN, CONN.

YARMOUTHVILLE, ME., April 21, 1912.

Dear Mr. Lawrence,—I have read your interesting paper ever since it has been sent to our Sunday school. I am very interested in solving the puzzles and am sure others are, too. I read the stories in the paper, and often wish the continued stories came sooner.

In closing, I wish your paper the best of success, and intend sending in answers to the puzzles.

With best regards, I remain

A true reader

FRANCES COOMBS.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 34.

ENIGMA LXII.—Boy Scouts of America.

ENIGMA LXIII.—Vacation.

WHAT AM I AND OF WHAT AM I MADE?—1. Body.

2. Eyelids. 3. Knee-caps. 4. Drums. 5. Feet. 6. Nails. 7. Soles. 8. Muscles. 9. Palms. 10. Tulips. 11. Calves. 12. Hares. 13. Heart (hart). 14. Lashes. 15. Veins. 16. Arms. 17. Eyes and Nose. 18. Pupils. 19. Chest. 20. Temples. 21. Crown. 22. Skull. 23. Bridge. 24. Organs. 25. Palate.

TWISTED PRESIDENTS.—1. Abraham Lincoln. 2. John Adams. 3. James Garfield. 4. William Taft. 5. Andrew Jackson.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 35.

ENIGMA LXIV.—Battle of Bennington.

ENIGMA LXV.—Madagascar.

ENIGMA LXVI.—Kamchatka.

ENIGMA LXVII.—Charles W. Wellman.

DISGUISED BOTANY.—1. Larkspur. 2. Carnation.

3. Sage. 4. Palm. 5. Dates. 6. Pennyroyal. 7. Oleander. 8. Sweet-pea. 9. Dandelion. 10. Phlox.

Contributions have been sent us by Ethel Richardson, Jamaica Plain, Mass.; Gertrude Shaw, South Boston, Mass.; Martha W. Horne, Dorchester, Mass.; Clarke Yerrington, Providence, R.I.

Answers to puzzles have been received from Gertrude Shaw, South Boston, Mass.; Katherine S. Kimball, Wollaston, Mass.; and Edmund B. Abbott, Allston, Mass.

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